

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

L-03 H-02 PA-01 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00

INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 A-01 FBO-02 SY-05 SCS-03 SCA-01

OPR-02 OC-05 CCO-00 /082 W
----- 012753

O 151130Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9014

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA IMMEDIATE

USIA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2303

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARN AND DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, PINS, LE

SUBJ: AMERICAN EMBASSY NOT REPEAT NOT UNDER SIEGE

1. I AM DISTURBED BY IMPRESSION THAT EMBASSY UNDER SIEGE WHICH MAY BE GIVEN TO RELATIVES AND FRIENDS OF PERSONNEL HERE BY JOURNALISTIC TRICK NBC, CBS AND ABC TV PLAYED THIS MORNING. TV TEAM BRIBED LOCAL AIN MREISSE NEIGHBORHOOD MILITIA AND MOSLEM SOLDIERS MANNING TANK WHICH ARE ALL PROTECTING THE EMBASSY INTO VARIETY OF WAR-LIKE POSES AND HAD THEM SHOOT OFF NUMBER OF ROUNDS FROM TANK TOWARD HOTEL DISTRICT. WHILE THERE ARE KATAEB SNIPERS IN HOLIDAY INN, THEY HAVE CAREFULLY AVOIDED SHOTTING AT EMBASSY AND SO FAR AT LEAST OCCASIONAL RESPONSE FROM TROOPS AROUND EMBASSY HAS HAPPILY NOT DRAWN MORE DIRECT FIRE. WE EXPECT THIS TO CONTINUE BUT HAVE BEEN TRYING TO
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MINIMIZE RESPONSE FROM TANK IN PARTICULAR SO AS NOT TO PUSH

OUR LUCK. IN ANY CASE IN AMERICANS WORKING IN EMBASSY ARE IN SECURE SECTIONS OF BUILDING AND CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM SMALL ARMS FIRE WHICH IS THE ONLY KIND KATAEB FORCES ARE PUTTING OUT FROM HOTEL DISTRICT.

2. HOPE STATE DEPT. SPOKESMAN CAN PUT OUR SITUATION INTO PERSPECTIVE AT NOON BRIEFING TODAY OR SOME OTHER WAY. HE SHOULD ALSO COUNTER RUMORS STARTED YESTERDAY THAT WE HAD BEEN "TAKEN OVER" BY TROOPS LOYAL TO REBEL LT. KHATIB, LEADER OF THE "LEBANESE ARAB ARMY". IN FACT, LEBANESE ARMY TROOPS REMAINING IN THIS AREA APPEAR TO HAVE PLEDGED ALLEGIANCE IN A LOOSE WAY TO "LEBANESE ARAB ARMY" CONCEPT AND HAVE PAINT ITS INSIGNIA ON TANKS, ETC. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THEIR HAVING TAKEN OVER THE EMBASSY NOR HAS ANY INTENTION TO DO SO BEEN IMPLIED. U.S. EMBASSY IS OF COURSE EXTRA-TERRITORIAL AND GUARANTEED IMMUNITY BY ANY AND ALL LEBANESE AUTHORITIES. LAMBRAKIS

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NNN

Message Attributes

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